

Specifically this bill is adding the what is in **BOLD CAPITALS**, below, to the SORA:

28.734. (1) Except as provided in this section and section 36, an individual required to be registered under article II shall not do 1 or more of the following:

(a) Work within a student safety zone.

(b) Loiter within a student safety zone.

**(C) WORK AT OR VOLUNTEER FOR AN ORGANIZATION THAT WORKS WITH INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE LESS THAN 18 YEARS OF AGE OR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT.**

This Addition would prevent Registered Citizens from working or volunteering as say an usher at their church as the church may have a youth organization within the general church organization. This bill would prevent (as worded) a Registered Citizen from working for GM, Ford, Chrysler or any other large organization as their may be and most likely is someone who has been a victim of sexual assault even though not working in the same building or in proximity to the Registered Citizen. Could a registered Citizen work at any large retailer as individuals under the age of eighteen are customers? What is the Registered Citizen to do interview everyone as to whether they were ever a victim of sexual assault. Will the personnel departments do that?

This poorly worded addition literally prevents a Registered Citizen from working or volunteering nearly anywhere.

I urge you to reject this as worded and seek another solution. Some food for thought is included in the items below I ask that you read them.

The purpose of the offender registry was to help law enforcement track those offenders who pose a danger to society. Unfortunately, the registry has become catch-all for the false promise of public safety. For instance, the registry does not discern someone's level dangerousness and risk to reoffend.

Michigan's registry has become the 4th largest in the country because it includes such a wide range of crimes, including minor infractions, and our registry laws allow virtually no opportunity to be considered for removal based on one's continued clean record.

Michigan's sex offender laws were not established out of evidence-based data. Over the years, our sex offender laws have proven to be a failed experiment. There have been numerous studies since the registry was created and the mountains of evidence consistently show that recidivism rates for sex offenders are among the lowest for all criminal offenses - averaging 3.1 percent. DOJ 2007 (the 3.1% includes all offenses not just Sex Offenses)

With 40,000 listed offenders and 200 new listings every month, this legislation affects a growing number of people regardless of their offense, their rehabilitation status, and their risk of re-offense.

This legislation would ban an entire population based on a sweeping generalization of an inaccurate and disproved perception of registrants. Any sanction should be individually assessed and informed by a risk assessment.

This legislation does nothing but offer a false sense of security; we should focus proven evidence-based interventions that offer true public safety. Requirements for the registry should not be driven by fear.

Public safety is not served when we continually block an individual's re-entry into society by creating insurmountable barriers and obstacles.

Lawmakers need to investigate evidence-based research to effectively reform our Sex Offender Registration Act so that it actually accomplishes its intended purpose to increase public safety. Until then, I urge you to reject this legislation.

Sincerely,  
Thomas Mercier